

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 309969 TOSEC 130030
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 309969 TOSEC 130030

FOLLOWING REPEAT LAGOS 14987 ACTION SECSTATE INFO DAR ES SALAAM
GABORONE LONDON LUSAKA MAPUTO PRETORIA USUN DATED DEC 29:

QTE:C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 14987

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PDEV, RH, NI, UK

SUBJECT: OBASANJO IS IMPATIENT OVER ZIMBABWE

REF: STATE 307327

1. I BRIEFED MEA AFRICA DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR AKADIRI DECEMBER 28
ON STATUS OF RHODESIAN DEVELOPMENTS AS THEY RELATE TO ANGLO-
AMERICAN PROPOSAL, DRAWING ON RECENT TELEGRAMS TO THE EXTENT THAT
REFTEL AUTHORIZED

2. CONVERSATION PROVED EXCEPTIONALLY TIMELY. AKADIRI SAID 'IN
PAST TWO DAYS' OBASANJO HAD BECOME MORE AND MORE WORRIED OVER
LACK OF VISIBLE FORWARD MOVEMENT IN ANGLO-AMERICAN SCENARIO AND
HAD TOLD HIM THAT NIGERIA MIGHT HAVE TO 'TAKE ACTION VERY SOON'
IF STALEMATE CONTINUED IN THE FACE OF APPARENT GROWING POSSIBILITY
OF INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. OBASANJO WAS CONVINCED SUCH AN INTERNAL
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SETTLEMENT WOULD BRING CIVIL WAR. OBASANJO HAD INSTRUCTED HIM
TO FIND OUT WHETHER THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL WAS GOING
ANYWHERE.

3. I INFORMED AKADIRI OF OWEN INVITATIONS TO MUGABE AND NKOMO
AND OF MACHEL INVITATION TO LORD CARVER. AKADIRI SAID OBSANJO
WOULD BE MOST INTERESTED BY THESE DEVELOPMENTS. HE SAID HE

COULD NOW REASSURE OBASANJO THAT THE SITUATION WAS NOT RPT NOT STATIC.

4. I WAS ABLE TO REASSURE AKADIRI ON TWO ADDITIONAL SPECIFIC POINTS OBASANJO HAD PUT TO HIM: WHAT WOULD BE US REACTION TO AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WITHOUT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, AND WERE WE SATISFIED THAT THE BRITISH COMMITMENT TO THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL WAS AS FIRM AS OURS? THE BRITISH SEEMED LESS CANDID, LESS FORTHCOMING AND LESS ENTHUSIASTIC THAN THE AMERICANS. I REPLIED WE REMAINED STEADFAST IN OUR BELIEF THAT ONLY AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT WOULD AVERT WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE, AND WE DID NOT SEE HOW SUCH A SETTLEMENT COULD BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT PATRIOTIC FRONT PARTICIPATION IN IT. AS FOR THE SECOND QUESTION (WHICH I FOUND MORE DIFFICULT), I SAID I THOUGHT ANY PERCEIVED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OUR APPROACH AND THAT OF THE BRITISH WERE LARGELY STYLISTIC. AKADIRI SAID HE WAS 'RELIEVED,' AND WOULD REPORT OUR CONVERSATION ACCORDINGLY TO OBASANJO.

5. I ASKED WHETHER THE FMG WOULD CONSIDER ENCOURAGING MUGABE AND KNOMO TO MEET WITH OWEN. AKADIRI REMINDED ME THAT HE HAD TOLD ME AT OUR LAST MEETING OF THE PRESSURE HE AND GARBA PUT ON NKOMO WHEN THEY SAW HIM IN LUSAKA (SEE LAGOS 14543) 'THE PATRIOTIC FRONT KNOWS THAT WE INSIST THEY BE MORE FORTHCOMING - WE HESITATE TO PRESSURE THEM FURTHER FOR THE TIME BEING LEST THEY CHARGE US WITH INTERFERENCE.'

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6. COMMENT: PRESIDENT CARTER'S REPLY TO OBASANJO'S LETTER OF NOVEMBER 25 (STATE 302457) MAY BE AN ADDITIONAL VEHICLE FOR ALLAYING NIGERIAN IMPATIENCE OVER THE TRAIN OF EVENTS IN RHODESIA, TO CIRCUMVENT POUCH DELAY, I URGE THE TEXT BE CABLED TO US FOR DELIVERY WITH SIGNED ORIGINAL TO FOLLOW. LETTER DEAL WITH THREE MAJOR ELEMENTS IN OBASANJO LETTER: CONTINUED US COMMITMENT TO SPEEDY RPT SPEEDY IMPLEMENTATION OF A-A PROPOSALS, CREATION OF A NEW ZIMBABWE ARMY BASED ON THE LIBERATION FORCES, AND THE HOW AND WHEN OF SMITH'S DEPARTURE

EASUM UNQTE CHRISTOPHER

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